

Missouri Division of Workforce Development
Skilled Workforce Initiative
Incumbent Worker Skills Shortages
Competitive Funding Proposal
Program Year 2006
Guidelines

The state will make up to \$1,000,000 available under this initiative. Applications must be received by March 31, 2006 and are subject to availability of funds. The Division of Workforce Development (DWD) reserves the right to limit awards within local areas in an effort to evenly distribute funds statewide. The application deadline is March 31, 2006.

I. Executive Summary

Include a short description of the project, local collaboration, outcomes and leveraging of local resources, including local activity funds (10% of the Title 1B formula funding streams).

II. Project Narrative

Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Application (RFA) is to solicit proposals for proven service approaches and strategies that will assist incumbent workers to succeed and advance in the workplace. This Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWP) is funded by Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and is administered by the DWD and the Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs). Through this RFA, Missouri will provide funding to assist businesses with skills upgrade training for current, full-time workers. Priority will be given to innovative and collaborative training projects that increase employee opportunities, and enhance company growth and productivity.

Strategic Partnerships

The application should minimally include a partnership/collaboration between the Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB), local educational agency (LEA), and local economic development organizations. Firmly established and committed community partnerships are vital to the success of an IWP project. Proposals are encouraged to include other agencies that offer essential expertise and should outline the partnerships relevant to the project design. Identify all partners

involved in the project and explain each partner's role. Each partner should verify its partnership in the project through a letter of commitment.

Statement of Need

Based on the results of Missouri Regional Skills Gap Initiative's Planning Phase Report, identify the current and future needs of business and industry as well as the targeted occupations that will be served by this project. Regional high growth, in demand industries identified through Missouri Economic Research Information Center's (MERIC) data, which was included in this skills gap analysis, should be considered as the focal point for this project.

Project Design

Competitive grants will be awarded to LWIBs that have designed comprehensive, innovative, and collaborative programs that best serve industries within their region. RFAs should identify the business or industries included in the application and provide justification as to why they are included in this project. Industries should include those not typically eligible for funding through other training sources. Projects funded by this application must be submitted through a LWIB and reflect a partnership between the LWIB, the LEA (community college or career technical school), and the local economic development organization for serving industries. The LWIB staff will administer, monitor, evaluate, and provide fiscal and grant compliance during the training process.

The definition of an Incumbent Worker is an individual that is an employee of the business (on a company's payroll) prior to the start of training.

Project descriptions must clearly demonstrate an increase in the skill levels of current workers to meet the needed workplace skill requirements. Projects should be for the purpose of improving employee earning potential through the upgrade of skills and training on new technology and to assist in keeping businesses competitive to promote growth and avoid layoff. Projects must be designed in cooperation with the industry and its workers, and must assure that workers remain skilled, employed, and competitive in the workplace.

Priority will be given to proposals that include a business retention system or an early warning network to avoid future downsizing or closure.

Eligible Training Services include:

- The LWIB is the grantee, but the application should identify the specific training provider. Training can be provided through Missouri's local educational institutions, vendor trainers, trainers employed by the business, subject-matter experts, or a combination of training providers.

- Training can be conducted at the business's own facility, at one of more than 80 educational facilities throughout Missouri, or at a combination of sites.
- Training may include industry or company specific skills, basic skills, technical and computer skills, on-the-job training, and soft-skills such as leadership, teamwork, and management skills.
- Training may also take the form of traditional classroom training, or other methods as approved by DWD.
- Preference will be given to training that represents a significant skills upgrade for employees and/or the greatest potential for impacting the company's competitiveness.

This section should also include a timeline for the project, including milestones; short and long-term goals for the overall project.

Performance/Outcomes

All RFAs must include past performance of the program operator.

All grant projects shall be performance-based with specific measurable performance outcomes. The LWIB may include performance measures in addition to those required in the application.

Specific measurable performance outcomes the IWP project plans to achieve can include at a minimum:

- Number of trainees enrolled and number of trainees completing training;
- Demonstrate business growth or expansion;
- Demonstrate increases in productivity through measurements;
- Demonstrate that funds used to train incumbent workers resulted in lowering turnover rates;
- Increase retention of the existing workforce and demonstrate higher post-training wages of participating employees;
- Identify the number of trainees that achieved a promotion as a result of training;
- Provide a list of trainees that attained a certificate, degree, credential or college credit; and
- Provide a description and number of skills upgraded.

Businesses shall provide sufficient documentation to the LWIB for identification of all employee participants (including social security numbers of trainees) for calculation of performance measures required by WIA, and any other outcomes deemed pertinent by DWD.

Staffing Qualifications

Not applicable.

III. Use of Funds Policy

Identify project activities and the funding source. WIA 15% funds will be used to fund all IWP proposals.

Identify project activities and corresponding funding source. Funds awarded through this RFA will only be used to cover costs appropriate for the program design identified in each project.

Reimbursable training costs are part of the approved budget in the final IWP grant award and can include those expenses related to specific job training such as:

- Instructor salaries;
- Curriculum development;
- Textbooks/manuals and materials/supplies;
- Tuition expense; and
- 50% of trainee wages during an on-the-job training period, unless pending DOL waiver is approved.

Only training costs incurred between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007 are eligible to be included in this project.

IV. Budget

The RFA budget submission guidelines prescribed are to be followed.

Each application should demonstrate 100% matching funds. All matching funds must be provided by the business/industry. Matching funds must be verifiable, traceable, and available for review or audit. In-kind match can include items such as:

- Other training costs not included in this IWP project;
- Equipment rental or purchased specifically for use during training with a pro-rated cost for the duration of the training project;
- Reasonable charges for other facilities used specifically for training; and/or
- Wages of trainees while in training and away from job duties. Trainees must be provided full wages while participating in the training. (If enrolled in OJT, a maximum of 50% of the wages may be used as match, unless pending DOL waiver is approved.)

V. Project Reporting

The RFA project reporting guidelines prescribed are to be followed.

VI. Evaluation and Scoring

Proposals will be evaluated by an interagency team. Scoring criteria will be based on the following critical program elements.

35% Project Design and Innovation

(How well the application includes the required/suggested elements of project design. Quality of the IWP training planned for the project. How well the application includes input and cooperation from industry and its workers in the project design. Priority will be given to proposals that include a business retention system or an early warning network.)

25% Strategic Partnerships

(Firmly established and committed partnerships are vital to the success of an IWP project. How well the application addresses the strategic partnerships of the project.)

25% Performance/Outcomes

(The quality of the specific measurable performance outcomes the IWP project plans to achieve.)

15% Budget and Financial Accuracy

(Each application should include a line item budget including a breakout of specific training costs and a description of other funds utilized in this project. Priority will be given to those applications leveraging other funding and in-kind contributions.)

VII. Reservation Clauses

The RFA reservation clauses prescribed are to be followed.

VIII. Procurement

The RFA procurement guidelines prescribed are to be followed.

Proposals should be submitted to the attention of Roderick Nunn, Division of Workforce Development, 421 East Dunklin, P.O. Box 1087, Jefferson City, MO 65102

E-mail: roderick.nunn@ded.mo.gov Fax: 573-522-9496.

Questions regarding this proposal should be submitted to Amy Deem, Division of Workforce Development, 421 East Dunklin, P.O. Box 1087, Jefferson City, MO 65102

E-mail: amy.deem@ded.mo.gov or by phone at 573-526-8271.